DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 374 937 RC 019 785

AUTHOR Freeman, Kate; And Others
TITLE Ojibwe, Mohawk, and Inuktitut Alive and Well? Issues of Identity, Ownership, and Change.
PUB DATE Apr 94
NOTE 41p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (New Orleans, LA, April 1994).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indian Education; American Indian Languages; American Indians; *Canada Natives; Community Action; Cultural Maintenance; Elementary Secondary Education; Eskimos; Foreign Countries; *Inupiaq; *Language Maintenance; *Language Usage; Literacy; Native Language Instruction; Nonformal Education; *Ojibwa; Preschool Education; Tribally Controlled Education
IDENTIFIERS Canada; *Mohawk

ABSTRACT

This paper examines current usage, educational initiatives, and future prospects for survival of three Canadian Aboriginal languages--Odawa (frequently called Ojibwe), Mohawk, and Inuktitut. The presentation centers around the direct insider stories of Mohawk and Odawa coauthors, with comparative commentary by an outsider with long-term experience in Inuit communities. Among all Canadian indigenous peoples, 36 percent of persons over 15 and 13 percent of school-age children speak their indigenous language, a dramatic shift from 15 years ago when over half of indigenous children entered school with native language fluency. Odawa and Mohawk communities demonstrate a pattern of increasing language loss with each generation. Among Inuit, however, 72 percent of adults and 39 percent of schoolchildren (much higher proportions in the eastern Arctic) speak Inuktitut, and 88 percent of speakers also read the language. An overview and informant comments cover the following topics: (1) school issues and effects (language of instruction controversies, innovations that adapt school culture to community needs, evolving roles of indigenous teachers, and dissatisfaction with indigenous teacher preparation); (2) community-based efforts to teach and maintain indigenous languages; (3) the relationship of language to culture and of language structure to thought patterns and worldview; and (4) language change and hope (language attitudes across Canada, emerging bilingual and multiple-literacy practices, and increasing contacts among Inuit-speaking peoples around the Arctic). Appendices contain language demography data and the texts of interviews with key informants. (SV)

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ED 374 937

Ojibwe, Mohawk, and Inuktitut Alive and Well?
Issues of Identity, Ownership, and Change

Kate Freeman and Arlene Stairs

Faculty of Education, Queen's University

Kingston, ON Canada K7L 3N6

Email:FREEMANK&QUCDN.QUEENSU.CA or
STAIRSA@QUCDN.QUEENSU.CA

Evelyn Corbière

Principal, Pontiac Elementary School

Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve

Wikwemikong, ON Canada P0P 2J0

Dorothy Lazore

Quinte Mohawk School, Tyeninaga Mohawk Territory

RR 1, Deseronto, ON Canada K0K 1X0

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthrolpological Association, April 1994, New Orleans

Running head: ALIVE AND WELL?

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Ojibway, Mohawk, and Inuktitut Alive and Well?

Issues of Identity, Ownership, and Change

We focus on the life and health of three indigenous languages in eastern Canada with dramatically differing histories and prospects, ranging from southern Ontario along the US border to north of the Arctic Circle. Our presentation centres around the direct insider stories of struggle and community action offered by Dorothy Lazore, from the Mohawk south (with input from Jan Hill; see Appendices B and C), and Evelyn Corbière, from the Odawa central-north (see Appendix D; note that Ojibwe -- sometimes called Chippewa in the US -- and Odawa peoples' speak the same language, most commonly called Ojibwe). They will introduce us to their own vital stories of work for their languages and schools and to ongoing developments in their communities. Striking and sometimes encouraging comparisons with the situation of eastern Arctic Inuktitut will be provided by Arlene Stairs (offered with regrets that expenses, distance, and time prevent an Inuk colleague from joining us), an outsider with longterm experience in Inuit and other indigenous communities. These comparisons are incorporated into an overview of critical issues from the accounts presented and our ongoing reflections on the health of Odawa, Mohawk, and Inuktitut at this moment in history. Kate Freeman -- also an outsider with much life experience inside indigenous communities and concerns, including her interviewing and other contributions to the paper will begin with a brief introduction to indigenous demographics and contexts in Canada.

Demographics and Contexts

It is essential to be very cautious with figures regarding indigenous populations and particularly indigenous

languages (Burnaby, 1982, 1984). Among other factors, the boundaries of indigenous identity vary and shift, and access and response to census and survey instruments is uneven and is mediated by geographic location and political purposes. The variable definitions of language use and the subjectivity of self-report add to the uncertainty of statistical interpretation. Given these caveats, however, we offer a few global and largely proportional demographics to describe the indigenous population of Canada. Unless otherwise indicated, national figures are derived from census and Aboriginal Peoples' Survey data gathered in 1991 and include reserve and off-reserve Amerindians, Métis, and Inuit (Statistics Canada, 1993a, 1993b and see Appendix A).

Approximately 3% to 5% of Canada's population, or something over 1,000,000 people, claim aboriginal identity. 1.3% of this population lives in Ontario, the most populous province and home of Odawa and Mohawk co-authors here, and home of the largest absolute number (but among the smallest proportions) of indigenous people in any province or territory. The ancestry of status Aboriginals in Ontario (two thirds of the status/non-status indigenous total), is roughly split between 70% Algonquian peoples of whom 75% are Ojibwe or Odawa, and 30% Iroquoian peoples of whom 30% are Mohawk (very small minorities add seven other indigenous language groups to the province; Burnaby, 1984). Inuit, 6% of Canada's Aboriginal population, live above the tree line in Arctic Québec, Labrador and the Northwest Territories. About 25% of Canadian and 6% of world Inuit live in Arctic Québec where our Inuit focus is centred (SAGMAI, 1984; in Stairs, 1988, p. 311).

Turning to language, figures comprising all Canadian indigenous people show that currently 36% of adults (over age 15) but only 13% of children ages 5 to 14 speak their indigenous languages. This reflects a dramatic shift from

15 years ago when 23% of indigenous children entered school speaking only their own language and 35% entered speaking both their indigenous and English languages (Burnaby, 1982) -- well over half the population beginning school with indigenous language fluency. In the decade from 1971 to 1981 indigenous to English language shift is estimated at 25% to 30% (Burnaby, 1984), and clearly continues in the accounts of our contributors. Of remaining speakers, 36% of adults and 42% of children also write their language. In relation to this slightly higher proportion of child to adult literacy, over 20% of children compared to 6% of adults claim indigenous language learning from their school. However, the school still remains much less significant than family and other contexts of language learning (Statistics Canada, 1993b, see Table 3.1).

Evelyn Corbière notes the general awareness in her reserve, Wikwemikong that the parent generation is fluent in Odawa but young people are not. In the Mohawk communities the situation varies, from one somewhat comparable situation in nearby Akwesasne, Dorothy Lazore's family home, where she notes it is the under-30s who do not speak, to Tyendinaga, Jan Hill's reserve, where only a few speakers remain. Lowe (1983) describes the "classic pattern of language loss" across four or less living generations (p. ix). Elders are bilingual with a bias toward indigenous language; middle-aged persons are bilingual with a bias toward English; teens, twenties and thirties have passive, or comprehending, knowledge of the language but rarely speak it; and the children of this latter group have little or no knowledge of the language. The extreme youth of indigenous populations underscores the significance of this pattern. Ten years ago half the population of some indigenous groups was under 14 years of age compared to the overall Canadian median of half under 30 years (Normandeau, 1981). While birth rates are

dropping in some regions, still close to 40% of the Aboriginal population is under 14 years of age.

To close this demographic review with a glimmer of hope, it is important to note that such patterns and rates of language loss are not universal. Among Inuit, the proportion of adult speakers, 72% (essentially 100% if just the eastern Arctic is considered), is double the national average of indigenous speakers and includes many unilingual Inuktitut elders and middle-aged persons; the proportion of child speakers, 39% (again much higher in the east), is triple the national indigenous average. Nationally, and in the Ojibwe language, about one third of speakers read, but this rises to 88% for Inuktitut (Dorais, 1993, p. 124). We will return to consider the history and implications of such a dramatic contrast in our reflections below.

ODAWA AND MOHAWK ACCOUNTS: INSIDER STORIES OF STRUGGLE

N.B. NOTES TO DATE ON THE NARRATIVE ACCOUNTS OF ODAWA AND MOHAWK CO-AUTHORS, STRUCTURED THROUGH INTERVIEWS, ARE APPENDED (Appendices B, C, D). WE INTENTIONALLY PRESENT THEM DIRECTLY AND SEPARATELY FROM THEIR INCLUSION IN THE REFLECTIONS WHICH FOLLOW BELOW.

Reflection on the Issues: An Overview

In reflecting on these accounts, and many other via personal, written and other media encounters, we turn to the three themes of our subtitle. The theme of identity takes focus in both school and beyond school issues and efforts (first two sections below), as does the theme of ownership or control, and identity finds a particularly deep focus in issues of meaning and cultural values (third section below). The theme of change, both distressing language loss and

creative language evolution, is woven throughout our reflections (final section). Only a brief overview is suggested here, and the co-construction of such insider-outsider reflections is work still in progress. Such work should not distract us from continually returning to the direct inside expression of indigenous language and education issues.

School Issues and Effects

"There is some confusion about the direction that Aboriginal language development should take," reported the Assembly of First Nations (1988, p. 75; see Appendix E) in their comprehensive study carried out over four years in the mid-1980s. While 80% of study respondents felt it was important for students to speak their Aboriginal language, only 32% agreed it should be used as a main language for classroom teaching; 50% simply said "no." Despite accumulated evidence that early first language immersion schooling is effective in promoting both minority first language and later second language learning (e.g., Cummins, 1985), significant numbers of submissions still favoured only daily indigenous language classes throughout the school years, or else late immersion following students' mastery of basic skills in English.

The either-or assumption of indigenous first language education interfering with second language proficiency, and so with academic and overall progress, has not as yet been fully overcome. Remaining doubts are demonstrated in some contexts by the endorsement of oral but not written indigenous language teaching. More broadly, Jan describes the community pride in Tyendinaga over "progressive" introduction of computers into the school, but resistance to increased Mohawk language initiatives. One might see this either-or mentality as tied to the lasting assimilationist experiences of many parents' residential schooling where,

removed from their kin and community for the process, they were inculcated with the abandonment of language and tradition as the path to survival and economic success.

In his analysis of Aboriginal community survival in Australian Aboriginal communities, Bullivant (1985) uses a two axis model in which communities are seen to emphasize in varying proportions an economic base, i.e., control of organizational structures and resources in relation to the outside culture, and an ideational base, i.e., values, language, and social role models of the indigenous culture. Diverse emerging designs for indigenous education suggest many third, versus either-or, forms are possible where western and indigenous ways can be negotiated along both axes toward modern indigenous identities, models of schooling, and language patterns (see in Stairs, in press). Some outstanding examples of such culturally creative developments are offered by our contributors.

Dorothy tells us of the courageous decade-plus survival of the parent-operated Freedom School in Akwesasne. This small school operates entirely in Mohawk independently of state educational systems. She also recounts the beginning struggle and development history of the Mohawk immersion program at Kahnewake as Mohawk has gradually been extended through grade 6 level. This situation operates through one form of two-domain schooling where Mohawk and English languages (and to some content and pedagogical approaches) are strictly separated. In Wikwemikong, a program of preschool Odawa immersion followed by bilingual schooling is developing, with many potential spin-off effects through its situation at the community "Hub" Centre (Evelyn, and Cecil King, personal communication, March 1994). One Inuit approach has been the effort to make the school "smaller" in importance and time so that it can be fit around the rest of life, including critical hunting seasons out on the land where the "real" Inuktitut is used.

These and other stories of initiative and struggle need to be told in great detail, with a search for "what makes the difference." Many such instructive case studies of community controlled, "owned," schools have been appearing in recent years, including several in a new special issue of the Peabody Journal of Education entitled "Negotiating the Culture of Indigenous Schools" (e.g., Lipka, 1994). Documentation and analysis must be cautious and thorough since we have sometimes seen community controlled schools to sometimes be a force towards western values and roles, knowledge base, and language despite deepest intentions (Ryan, 1989; cf., Fishman, 1984). Illustrative of the institutional-indigenous conflicts involved are the issues of full professional pay for elders traditionally expected to offer their teaching, and academic credit for the school rather than home learning of a community language. Evelyn advocates such pay and credit from her Odawa perspective while others question the effect of both in far northern communities (e.g., Douglas, in press).

One particularly critical indigenous language schooling issue concerns the evolving roles of indigenous teachers. Not only are indigenous language teachers a priority for our co-authors, and a major work focus for Dorothy, they have been the key bridges between community life, language and formal schooling during situations of important growth in indigenous education (see Hualapai presentation this session; Annahatak, 1994). In surveys (along with interviews and case studies) done in the course of planning a new indigenous teacher education program for Ontario (Research and Consultation Project, 1990), 85% of respondants were not satisfied with current indigenous teacher education programs (100% in northern Ontario), and apprenticeship, community base, part-time and correspondance

approaches in various patterns were all supported. It is clear from planning and now from program responses, as well as from sustained success in a pioneeering Inuit field-based approach in Arctic Québec (Stairs, 1988), that alternative delivery methods are critical to facilitating teachers' language, community and school bridging and allowing them to develop an authentic indigenous form of education and language use.

Beyond the School

Personal experiences and research demonstate that language initiatives limited to the school have little maintenance or renewal effect, to the extreme described by Harris (1992) where materials for entirely school-generated Aboriginal literacy programs lie unused on classroom shelves. Both Odawa and Mohawk accounts note the failure of school language teaching over the years to preserve their languages from loss -- a particularly dramatic loss pattern to date in Tyendinaga. Paradoxically given this history, parents may feel they have done something about language by establishing a 20-minute-per-day Odawa program from grades 1 to 8 and leaving the effort to the institution. Perhaps this reaction is another legacy of paternalistic residential schooling. While it seems that the indigenous language and its furthering are treated as under the control of the school, schools have been consistently ineffective in the ideational as opposed to economic dimension of learning. Inuit see two routes to these two domains of life and knowledge. The school route involves wage work information, second language, and literacy in both languages while the family and community route involves home activities, kinship and social relations, and the indigenous language (Dorais, personal communications, 1992).

Statistics for indigenous people overall support the continuing sense of family and community as the primary

route for indigenous language learning. While children do report more school learning of language than their parents, learning from parents, grandparents and others, in that order, still dominate by far (Statistics Canada, 1993b; Appendix A). That schooling can, however, be a significant factor in strengthening indigenous language given a background of community involvement is reflected in a survey of Inuit students in the 1980s. In Arctic Québec where Inuktitut instruction is considerably more emphasized than in the bordering Northwest Territories, over half the secondary students surveyed responded that they spontaneously chose Inuktitut over English in bilingual publications (increasingly common in newspapers and other media) versus only a quarter of the Northwest Territories students (Staff, 1981).

Odawa and Mohawk co-authors here evidence the importance they see in action beyond school by filling their accounts with examples of community self-determination in which cultural leaders, parent volunteers, and other groups assume ownership of language survival efforts, not just in terms of school control as described above but in a whole range of community efforts. It seems that such activists at this stage rely on organized programs and events over an "everyday" and home-based language focus. Organized activities emphasized by Evelyn, Dorothy and Jan include adult classes, summer immersion camp, daycare, cultural centres, the youth cultural group Peacemaker's Drum, church and Longhouse events. Numerous other initiatives might be added such as writers' workshops. In Tyendinaga this summer a woman writer in residence held weekly sessions at the local library; in several Inuit communities of the Baffin Writers' Workshop elders and youth meet periodically to collaborate in writing (McCaulley, n.d.).

Beyond such structured projects, our co-authors all stress the significance of "raising the profile" of the

language in everyday community life, and this is in fact occurring slowly along with the focus on organized activities. Visibility is increasing through a range of media, more use of the written language per se and of linguistic technology such as word processing software, signs, indigenous language use at social events and in business -- if only at the initial level of indigenous greetings on the street and on the telephone, indigenous literacy in government and economic functions (see examples in Standing Committee, 1990), and even the striking example of a Mohawk carpenter learning the language so as to carve words and meaning into his pieces. Continuing advancement of indigenous language use from primarily organized to spontaneous and daily life contexts is an often expressed goal. The active involvement of families across generations is essential to language maintenance and renewal, whether parents and grandparents with their children or -- as Dorothy describes -- aspiring indigenous language teachers seeking out "immersion" experiences with older fluent relatives through a shopping trip or a meal out.

Language Meaning and Cultural Values

By speaking Mohawk, in Jan's perspective, one's place in the interrelated world is taught and reinforced; one learns respect and right relationship, and thanksgiving as embodied in the Mohawk Thanksgiving Address moving through all levels of existence from earth to animal life forms, humans and the heavens. Through the structure of the language, the matrilineal organization and agricultural base of Iroquioan culture is passed on and each person comes to understand cycles and seasons and her or his connection to and effect on everyone and everything else. For Dorothy, this means preserving and renewing the language in order to communicate with the Creator. The power of this spiritual meaning and value orientation, expressed collectively

through the Longhouse ceremonies and their high forms of traditional language, can cause some resistance when language teaching -- often initiated by Longhouse people -- is construed in terms of "evangelism". The Mohawk Longhouse, insists Jan, is not religion but a way of life in all its aspects. From her Odawa perspective, Evelyn expresses the fear that language loss means that such core values and ways of living can no longer be passed on to youth.

Another related dimension of meaning inherent in many indigenous languages is structure expressing the world as continually in progress, changing and reforming in contrast to a static store of objects or knowledge or even personal characteristics. Such languages are "verby" in terms of English and other western languages: the moon is "walks at night," (Leavitt, 1991 citing a Maliseet example) and who has not now met "Dances with Wolves"? Inuktitut has no fixed parts of speech, for instance, but rather word-forming elements put together in the moment of discourse (Lowe, 1985, pp. 15-17). Such momentary arrangements have a capacity to integrate the speaker's experience into a more all-at-once rather than linear utterance; more an image than a verbal sequence. The subject or ego-actor focus of languages such as English is absent, e.g. with a very rough translation, "Walking was happening last night, raining, it was me," rather than, "I was out walking in the rain last night." We leave the audience to speculate on the vast range of worldview and meaning-making distinctions carried in languages so dynamically and holistically structured, and what losses and changes in cultural values might be part of shift from such a language to English.

Indigenous languages have strong value as symbols of identity, in addition to cultural worldview and communication value, including written forms as identity

symbols even though for many indigenous languages these forms are very new. Given the high level of Inuktitut syllabic literacy (a writing system first devised for Cree and Ojibwe) and its non-school-based history, Inuit are committed to the written form, advocating more recognition of elders' knowledge "in paper" as expressed at a 1985 education symposium, and there is some resistance to changes in the early (from the 1860s) orthography. Since 1976 there has been a standard orthography in both syllabic and Roman characters, widely used now but not in religious texts or by elders. For many indigenous language educators and consultants such as Dorothy, preparing standardized grammars and dictionaries and teaching the language in such literate modes is a high priority, ranking with immersion, and strongly linked to saving the language with all its meaning and symbolic value.

Even among Inuit, however, and more openly expressed among some Amerindian groups, is a certain ambivalence and and sometimes even resistance to literacy. The literacy-based teaching to secondary students and adults of indigenous language vocabulary and grammar "places the orality aside," diminishing the spontaneous and integral characteristics described above, "makes the learners become passive, and it becomes dull" in the words of a university teacher educator from Evelyn's reserve (Cecil King, personal communication, March 1993). Dorothy successfully resorts to "total physical response" teaching, far from dull, but also uses both immersion and literacy-based teaching in various circumstances. Some feel that children who learn to write their own languages, as well as English, will not remember, will not carry the traditional store of ready knowledge and know who they are -- genealogically and otherwise. They will get lazy, relationships will change, social cohesion will be threatened. Parents at the Akwesasne Freedom School

recently rejected a particular focus on written productions when they felt it was reducing the level of the spoken language and its knowledge in the school. Thus the cultural values and identity symbolism carried in written languages are variable and under negotiation in many indigenous settings.

Language Change, Range, and Hope

Given the devastating language shift statistics reviewed at the outset, one questions the now 10-year-old national study predicting longterm survival for three of Canada's fifty-plus indigenous languages: Cree, Inuktitut, and Ojibwe (Foster, 1984). These three languages had over 5,000 speakers of all ages, an active literacy, and other indicators of survivability. Wide viability differences now separate the two of these languages represented in our presentation, Odawa and Inuktitut, with growing concern about Odawa. In the course of her extensive studies of indigenous language demographics in Canada, Burnaby (1984) proposes there are factors other than geographic proximity and contact pressure, or, we add, even institutionalized suppression over long periods, that prevent or resist language shift: "Communities that have been in close contact with non-Native society for several centuries, for example, the Six Nation reserve or Walpole Island, still have a number of Native speakers (p. 12)". It is our business to discover what those factors might be in any particular community.

Certainly language attitudes and beliefs, related to whatever constellation of sociohistorical circumstances, are powerful indicators of language strength. Recent survey work in Arctic Québec showed strong agreement among the Inuit and both Anglophone and Francophone populations that bilingualism was possible and desirable (Taylor & Wright, 1989), and that this might aspire towards balanced or equal

status bilingualism, as opposed to transitional, content or domain specific, or elite bilingualism (Taylor, 1990). Dorais (e.g., 1993), Stairs and others feel this is an oversimplified picture, but think in terms of complementary languages or "diglossia" which can also be a dynamic, viable pattern. Dorais' (1983) dictionary of new eastern Inuktitut language components created from the 1960s demonstrates the vitality of a surviving indigenous language with such long range attitudes. These new components are created in three ways: (a) coining of new terms describing appearance or most often function, e.g., aeroplane as "the ascending one" or sometimes "the one with two" (twin Otter); (b) changing of traditional into contemporary meanings, e.g., light bulb as "an air bubble"; and borrowing from English and other indigenous and European languages, e.g., tea as "tii."

Multiple literacies or literacy practices are also emerging as use of both oral and written indigenous languages evolve. In one high Arctic community, five recognizably different literacies have been documented, the three in Inuktitut associated with casual out-of-school use, receptive church literacy, and new schooled Inuktitut literacy (Shearwood, 1987 and continuing studies). Differences have also been observed across communities in primary school children's developing written language. Two key variants were (a) a "modernizing" shortening of polysynthetic words but increased sentence length and fluency, maintaining traditional interconnectedness of expression, and (b) an anglicized syntax of short, unconnected, objective statements despite strong vocabulary and fluency (Stairs, 1990). Widely varying roles are emerging for literacies in Amerindian communities related to local language dynamics and attitudes, ranging from objectives for universal literacy to limited school-domain literacy to specialized indigenous literacies of a few "scribes" (Stairs, 1985).

In illustration of the divergence in indigenous language development which we are facing, we offer two closing examples. In a recent study of indigenous teachers' instructional preference (with 45 experienced Cree, Mohawk, and Inuit teachers in a teacher education course), comparisons of Mohawk and Inuit responses showed stronger Inuit support for reading in the indigenous language and reading in both languages, but slightly lower support than the Mohawk for reading in English only (McAlpine & Taylor, 1993). This finding fits the differing linguistic contexts of Inuit and Mohawk teachers as we now describe.

Beyond the continuing strength of Inuktitut in the eastern Canadian Arctic, Inuit have increasing contact with a circumpolar international linguistic community, particularly Greenland now two air hours on a regular basis from Iqaluit on Baffin Island. Kalaallisut, the Greenlandic dialect of the Inuit language, is the national language with about 50,000 speakers and a 265 year history of indigenous language education. The Inuit teacher education college, Illiniarfissuaq, first graduated teachers in 1845. Among the institutions supporting Greenlandic are a university, national library, printing house, bookstore, national archives, and diverse media (Dorais, 1990). Remarkably, given this vast cultural milieu and support system, two Inuit professionals, a supervisor of schools and an Inuktitut dictionary and wildlife encyclopedia author, recently said that they were "not really literate 'like us'," because they did not use reading and writing all the time every day. Rather than a negative assesment of "not being there yet," such comment should perhaps be taken as positive evidence of diversity in literacy practices and multiple options for evolving indigenous languages.

In sharp contrast is the Mohawk situation, where neigbouring communities struggle to share their remaining

speakers and language specialists, and active minorities strive for their ideational goals against a strong economic orientation. While a few in these communities insist one cannot be Mohawk without speaking the language, and that the culture dies with the language, a range of alternative options are accepted by others -- including more specific and unique community uses of the oral and written language as discussed earlier. In the extreme, one administrator -- even as she strives to learn the language for Longhouse purposes -- advocates a simultaneous deep mastery of English as one response enabling people to more subtly express Mohawk ideas even if they do not have the language. While the development of specifically indigenous usages of English is not the motivation of this paper, it must not be rejected as a parallel or complementary language path. Traditional Ojibwe teacher Jim Dumont addressed the mixed situation in Ontario in a recent video by the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition (1991).

> There will be a different kind of literacy for Native poeple. When Native people become literate...they will have developed a facility for using either their own language or English,...they will produce a literature that is **different** [emphasis original] from that of this society or any other culture. They will write books that will not only say different things but it will **say** it in a different manner, and will use, **use** the language in a different way.

In the same production, Janice Longboat insists that indigenous people must not live in the past; that in doing so they give up their power. Living in the present involves multiple and diverse paths to life and health for indigenous cultures and their languages, both from community to

community and within any single community. As we have discussed here, finding such paths of change involves issues of language ownership both within and beyond schools, and issues of identity not only through language use but at the deep level of meaning and cultural values.

Authors' Note

Beyond number are those we collectively thank for the experience of working at this piece together, and the communication and collaboration we hope it will bring to our deep concerns.

Please note the still evolving terms indigenous, Aboriginal, occasionally Native and First Nations. All have sociohistorical connotations too complex for discussion here, but we ask you to use them in good faith in reference to indigenous peoples' in this paper. The orthography of many place and personal names is also in flux; again our request to accept our moment in time for the spellings used.

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Appendix A

Demographic Tables

TABLE 1:

Aboriginal Origin Responses,
for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991 - 20% Sample Data.

ORIGINS	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
1)Total population with Aboriginal origins	1,002,675	137,615	243,550	35,390
Total North American Indian responses	783,890	112,590	220,135	11,100
Total Metis responses	212,650	19,480	26,905	4,310
Total Inuit responses	49,255	8,480	5,250	21,355

taken from Age and sex: 1991 Aboriginal data. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.p.2

TABLE 2:

Population Reporting Aboriginal Identity by Aboriginal Group, Adults and Children, On and Off Indian Reserves and Settlements, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991. (Partial Sample)

ABORIGINAL GROUP	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
1) Adults, 15 years of age and over Reporting Aboriginal identity (partial sample)	**388,900**	**37,670**	**74,410**	**20,745**
North American Indian	**288,365**	**28,300**	**67,015**	**6,220**
On Indian reserves and settlements	102,075	13,450	13,740	135
Off Indian reserves and settlements	186,295	14,845	53,275	6,090
Metis	**84,155**	**6,210**	**7,615**	**2,510**
Inuit	**20,805**	**4,055**	**475**	**12,090**
2) Children, under 15 years Reporting Aboriginal identity (partial sample)	**236,810**	**18,625**	**40,485**	**13,840**
North American Indian	**172,315**	**13,365**	**35,910**	**3,585**
On Indian reserves and settlements	63,955	7,625	7,890	80
Off Indian reserves and settlements	108,365	5,740	28,020	3,505
Metis	**51,105**	**2,475**	**4,435**	**1,380**
Inuit	**15,410**	**2,975**	**310**	**8.940**

taken from Language, tradition, health, lifestyle and social issues: 1991 Aboriginal peoples survey. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.

TABLE 3.1:

Language and Tradition of the Adult (15+) Population Reporting Aboriginal Identity, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991. (Partial Sample)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
1) Persons who speak an Aboriginal language	139,375	17,680	15,485	15,415
1.i) Persons who speak				
Ojibwa	23,600	- - -	10,340	- - -
Iroquoian languages	730	115	500	- - -
Inuktitut	14,955	3,805	- - -	10,275
1.ii) Persons taught to speak an Aboriginal language by				
parents	126,750	16,840	14,025	14,340
grandparents	94,025	10,935	10,105	8,275
elders	74,590	8,200	7,600	6,710
school teachers	21,750	6,115	2,050	4,980
someone else	18,095	2,130	1,990	1,920
2) Persons who write Aboriginal language(s)	35,565	9,350	4,325	9,085
2.i) Persons who write				
Ojibwa	4,635	- - -	2,830	- - -
Iroquoian languages	230	80	- - -	- - -
Inuktitut	12,025	3,335	- - -	8,140
2.ii) Persons taught to write Aboriginal language(s) by				
parents	19,340	5,310	2,900	5,650
grandparents	10,275	2,645	1,745	1,925
elders	8,205	2,675	1,745	1,925
school teachers	15,675	4,975	1,310	4,780
someone else	7,650	1,670	695	2,070

taken from Language, tradition, health, lifestyle and social issues: 1991 Aboriginal peoples survey. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.

TABLE 3.1 (continued):

Language and Tradition of the Adult (15+) Population Reporting Aboriginal Identity, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991. (Partial Sample)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
3) Persons who read Aboriginal language(s)	**50,420**	**11,455**	**6,240**	**10,225**
3.i) Persons who read				
Ojibwa	**7,380**	**- - -**	**4,140**	**- - -**
Iroquoian languages	**475**	**155**	**295**	**- - -**
Inuktitut	**13,240**	**3,530**	**- - -**	**8,955**
3.ii) Persons taught to read by				
parents	**27,310**	**6,710**	**3,780**	**6,645**
grandparents	**16,045**	**3,490**	**2,505**	**2,375**
elders	**12,640**	**2,440**	**2,095**	**1,935**
school teachers	**19,815**	**5,785**	**1,760**	**5,185**
someone else	**11,850**	**2,095**	**1,400**	**2,390**
3.iii) Persons who read Aboriginal language				
newspapers	**17,610**	**3,770**	**2,485**	**6,700**
newsletters	**18,450**	**4,765**	**2,235**	**6,045**
magazines	**13,915**	**4,435**	**1,110**	**5,280**
4) Persons who listen or watch Aboriginal language				
radio	**98,270**	**18,200**	**11,495**	**16,335**
recordings	**74,380**	**16,625**	**9,250**	**8,850**
television	**131,680**	**13,065**	**22,175**	**16,715**
videos	**58,700**	**8,270**	**8,925**	**6,765**
4.i) Persons who report lack of availability of Aboriginal language				
radio	**81,640**	**6,120**	**15,165**	**200**
recordings	**73,520**	**5,730**	**12,575**	**1,295**
television	**75,855**	**10,995**	**11,485**	**420**
videos	**89,355**	**10,865**	**14,010**	**3,745**

taken from Language, tradition, health, lifestyle and social issues: 1991 Aboriginal peoples survey. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.

TABLE 3.2:

Language and Tradition of Children (ages 5-14) Reporting Aboriginal Identity, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991. (Partial Sample)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
1) Persons who speak an Aboriginal language	31,715	6,255	3,230	5,105
1.i) Persons who speak				
Ojibwa	3,445	. . .	2,125	. . .
Iroquoian languages	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Inuktitut	6,025	1,715	. . .	4,130
1.ii) Persons taught to speak Aboriginal language(s) by				
parents	28,080	5,930	2,735	4,785
grandparents	20,685	3,990	2,255	2,770
elders	12,515	2,200	1,255	1,485
school teachers	17,400	4,795	1,550	3,715
someone else	4,335	805	490	665
2) Persons who write Aboriginal language(s)	11,080	3,605	640	3,215
2.i) Persons who write				
Ojibwa	815	. . .	505	. . .
Iroquoian languages	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
Inuktitut	4,470	1,435	. . .	2,975
2.ii) Persons taught to write Aboriginal language(s) by				
parents	4,215	1,505	145	1,940
grandparents	1,695	525	. . .	560
elders	1,175	295	. . .	290
school teachers	10,390	3,485	540	3,100
someone else	605	90	. . .	180

taken from Language, tradition, health, lifestyle and social issues: 1991 Aboriginal peoples survey. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.

TABLE 3.2 (continued):

Language and Tradition of Children (ages 5-14) Reporting Aboriginal Identity, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991. (Partial Sample)

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS	CANADA	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	N.W.T.
3) Persons who read Aboriginal language(s)	13,460	4,000	920	3,500
3.i) Persons who read				
Ojibwa	1,120	- - -	675	- - -
Iroquoian languages	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -
Inuktitut	4,795	1,500	- - -	3,185
3.ii) Persons taught to read by				
parents	5,255	1,810	235	2,165
grandparents	2,770	780	200	705
elders	1,735	395	155	375
school teachers	12,395	3,875	710	3,320
someone else	845	130	- - -	215
3.iii) Persons who read Aboriginal language				
newspapers	2,585	860	- - -	1,245
newsletters	3,060	1,115	170	1,130
magazines	2,825	1,115	- - -	1,195
4) Persons who listen or watch Aboriginal language				
radio	23,705	5,660	2,695	4,800
recordings	24,120	5,160	3,040	3,185
television	35,705	3,745	5,795	5,845
videos	19,320	2,750	2,795	2,600
4.i) Persons who report lack of availability of Aboriginal language				
radio	28,400	1,470	4,275	125
recordings	26,515	1,825	4,010	405
television	27,780	3,260	3,940	150
videos	30,895	3,340	4,235	1,215

taken from Language, tradition, health, lifestyle and social issues: 1991 Aboriginal peoples survey. Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology. 1993.

Appendix B

Dorothy Lazore Consultation Outline: January 30, 1994

Dorothy teaches Mohawk at both an elementary school on reserve and a secondary school near Tyendinaga Mohawk reserve on the northeastern shore of Lake Ontario. She also runs community and university evening classes, and has been central to such sustained milestone projects as the Akwesasne Freedom School and the Kahnewake immersion program.

THE NATIVE WORLD

1) Life Before Contact
   - language was intact
   - had own form of government
   - had own way of educating children in religious beliefs and philosophy

2) Contact
   - outside (foreign) government took over
   - reserve system was established
   - Native people did not have a chance to live their lives, i.e. their own ways, their culture, philosophy, form of government or way of learning and teaching, their spirituality.
   - Native world has been in the hands of Federal government and churches for five hundred years.

3) Indian Control of Indian Education (1969)
   - landmark paper written by National Indian Brotherhood, and marking a drive toward self determination among Native people in Canada.

4) Establishment of Immersion School (in Akwesasne)
   - journal summary
   - program
   - immersion
   - children
   - parent question
   - parental involvement

5) Hope of Re-establishing Identity
   - ownership
   - spirituality
   - resourcefulness
   - loving oneself
   - responsibility
   - security
   - wholeness

   GOAL: LANGUAGE SURVIVAL

Native Education

In 1969, Native Language programs were introduced into the Federal school system on the reserves.

In 1972, in August, the General Assembly of the National Indian Brotherhood presented to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development a statement on education.

In 1973, February 2, the Minister gave official recognition to Indian Control of Indian Education, approving its proposals and committing the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to implementing them.

In 1969, education committees, parents and educators introduced Mohawk language programs into the existing Federal schools on the reserve.

In 1979, parents, educators and education committees in one reserve school presented a pilot project immersion Mohawk language program. Over a period of ten years, the Mohawk language immersion program continued into every grade level from nursery and kindergarten through to Grade 6. Every subject and concept from nursery to Grade 6 was taught via the Mohawk language.

Indian Control of Indian Education is a reality. Native values, philosophy, culture and language were reflected in the curriculum. Teaching personnel were from the community and trained in education.

In Indian tradition, each adult is personally responsible for each child, to see that he learns all that he needs to know in order to live a good life. Happiness and satisfaction, contentment, comes from being proud of oneself and Onkwehon:we people, from living in harmony with who we are, loving the person that we are, and investing in oneself. This whole concept is gradually disappearing among our Mohawk communities.

Over the past twenty years, our Mohawk language has disappeared, our resources as Natives are being depleted. Identity is lost or scattered. Ownership of who we are was placed in the hands of the government, religion and schools. Native people need to look within themselves, to rekindle the inner depth of who we are as Native people, to recapture the wisdom of our Elders, and to re-learn our language so that we can communicate with our Creator.

Appendix C

Interview with Jan Hill: Sunday, February 13, 1994

Jan is a member of the Turtle Clan, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. She is a concerned community member and single parent who is working on learning the Mohawk language and participating in the culture and traditions. She has served as an Education Counsellor for her reserve, and as a Program Liaison Counsellor at Queen's University. She is presently working to complete her Bachelor of Education in Native Studies as well as her Bachelor of Education degree.

We conducted the interview by telephone, talking for about an hour about out-of-school initiatives to support/ restore Mohawk language at Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. Jan talked mostly about the Mohawk language immersion camp, using an historical approach. Comments made are presented below.

<u>Out-of-School Initiatives to Preserve/ Foster Aboriginal Language in Tyendinaga:</u>

Jan identified the following out-of-school initiatives to preserve/ support Aboriginal language (Mohawk) in her area:

* **Mohawk Language Immersion Camp**

The camp was started in 1991 on the initiative of half a dozen parents, mostly mothers with younger children. These parents had a genuine interest in preserving the language and culture, and were mostly 'Longhouse people' who supported traditional cultural beliefs and activities. They were concerned that although Mohawk as a second language has been offered in the school for the past twenty years, the language is disappearing from Tyendinaga. It is estimated that fewer than ten percent of the people at Tyendinaga are fluent in Mohawk at present of a population of approximately twenty-eight hundred people.

At the time the camp started, the band council was hesitant to put immersion programs in place in the school. Likewise, daycare immersion was not supported. While a new program in computers was accepted immediately, the school committee and council were not comfortable with immersion Mohawk in the school. Consequently, the immersion camp was a 'grass roots initiative' with band council donating only the use of a space, not funding.

To raise funds, parents (two in particular) went door to door in the community asking for donations. From that fund raising, enough money was made to hire three teachers for four weeks, and an immersion camp was held the summer of 1991 for over twenty children ten years of age and under. Teachers were brought in from Akwesasne, where Mohawk is more prevalent. An effort was made to identify idiomatic differences in the language used by the two communities and to teach the Tyendinaga version.

At the end of that first summer, the kids put on a play, using a Mohawk legend and presenting it entirely in Mohawk. Parents,

grandparents and aunties came to see that moving performance. Jan noticed some small changes after that in the community. Through the summer and into the fall, people started saying some of the common greetings in Mohawk, and she heard words spoken in the restaurant and on the streets.

The next summer, 1992, a three week immersion program was held for adults. While this program was only a start, it was effective enough that Jan noticed herself thinking in Mohawk at the end of the three weeks. That summer, some funding was secured through volunteer fund raising, and some was secured through applying to Secretary of State.

Last year a full scale Mohawk immersion daycare program was available to children from three to ten years of age, and operated for six weeks. There were two regular teachers, four classroom assistants, and two coordinators. Last summer was the first summer that there was money to pay a coordinator for the program. While some fund raising was done, a substantial grant was provided by Family and Child Services.

Most of the work in organizing immersion initiatives to date has been done by volunteers. In last year's daycare program, it was mandatory that parents volunteer for one day each. Organizers recognize that in order for children to become fluent in Mohawk, the whole family must be involved. Kids and parents must learn and speak together, learning words about useful things around the house and practising them at home.

These summer programs have been 'stepping stones' to increasing community involvement in language issues.

* **Peacemaker's Drum**

Peacemaker's Drum is a dance and drum group for young people and adults which started in 1989. There are about thirty people involved, ages two to forty-five years. Members make and wear traditional outfits, learn the dances and songs and their significance, and put on teaching activities for a wide range of audiences. Peacemaker's Drum has gotten people interested and involved in cultural activities. Out of this group have come half a dozen young people under eighteen years of age who would like to become Mohawk language teachers. There is a language teacher (Dorothy Lazore) who works with them.

* **Evening Classes**

Evening classes in Mohawk are presently available to adults in Tyendinaga, and there is a core group which has been coming to these classes for some time.

* **Oka**

After the incidents at Oka, there was a surge of pride in being Mohawk, and interest in Mohawk language and culture increased in Tyendinaga. This event contributed to a positive sense of Mohawk identity for many people. Especially the men benefited from it as they could see the role of warrior portrayed in a positive way. While women have carried on their role of caregiver, and added to

their role of community decision-maker and breadwinner, men's roles have changed drastically, leaving some disoriented. For this reason, it was especially important that Oka added to a sense of positive identity and provided role direction for Mohawk men.

* **Community Language Usage**

Since the summer immersion camps started, Mohawk is spoken more frequently in the community, there are street signs in Mohawk and English, and more businesses have Mohawk names. More community members (forty years and under) are asking about their Mohawk names and their clans. The language has become more high profile and there is an increased interest in it.

In-School Initiatives to Preserve/ Foster Aboriginal Language in Tyendinaga:

Along with those activities discussed above, J. Hill identified the following in-school initiatives to preserve/ support Aboriginal language (Mohawk) in her area:

* **Mohawk-as-a-Second-Language Program**

Mohawk has been offered in the schools for the past twenty years, and is presently available from the elementary grades up to grade eleven.

* **School Committee Study**

One of the individuals most active in organizing summer immersion programs sits on the School Committee, and last year asked permission to set up a subcommittee to examine all immersion programs offered in the neighbouring communities. Permission was granted and this subcommittee has now concluded its study, with a report to be released shortly. While Jan has not yet seen the report, she has heard that it emphasizes the need for immersion or partial immersion programs in the school. One concern is that these programs should be housed separately from non-immersion programs, and at present a facility is not available.

Obstacles to Preserving/ Fostering the Aboriginal Language in Tyendinaga:

Jan mentioned several things which undermine support for the language in her area.

* **Language Classes Not Enough**

While evening classes and those in the school are a start, more opportunity to speak the language is needed in order to become fluent. Some of those who are intent on learning the language feel frustrated at the lack of opportunity to use it, and find that they are not able to progress past a certain point without the chance for more language immersion experiences.

* **Negative Attitudes Towards Mohawk**

Some members of the community resist language instruction. One reason for this is that people in Tyendinaga realize that the

culture is in the language, and they don't want to teach culture. This is because people confuse culture with religion, and those who push the language are seen as evangelical. Though many of the supporters and initiators for language immersion are Longhouse people, and may be seen as religious because of this, Jan pointed out that the Longhouse is not just religion, it is a way of life incorporating many aspects.

While the community prides itself on 'progressive programs' such as computers in the school, Mohawk language initiatives have not enjoyed the same degree of support and pride.

* **Mohawk Speakers Scarce**

With fewer than ten percent of the population speaking Mohawk, it is difficult to find both teachers and opportunities to speak the language. English is the language of common usage. While children normally would learn Mohawk from their grandparents and from their mothers, at Tyendinaga, many mothers are non-Native. Of those mothers who are Mohawk, most are not speakers.

A Philosophical Base:

A Mohawk word is a phrase, not a single word, and as such, is highly descriptive as well as very gender-related. Incorporated in that phrase is a structure which mirrors how the Mohawk world is structured. For example, the language includes masculine, feminine, and a form used for animals. Within the feminine, there is one way of speaking to woman you know, and one more formal and respectful way of speaking to an older woman. There is 'everyday language,' language used for formal occasions, and language used in the longhouse - almost sacred. Through the language, respect and right relations are taught. By speaking Mohawk, one's place in an inter-related world is taught and reinforced. Jan and others are concerned that when the language is lost, the culture is lost.

Mohawk teaches what Jan called "the core of the culture," respect and thanksgiving. By the way the language is structured, it passes along central aspects of the culture such as the matrilineal organization, the agricultural base, respect for all living things, an understanding of cycles and the changing seasons, and the giving of thanks that the cycle continues. Through the language one learns that what one does affects oneself and everyone else, reinforcing a sense of being connected. Lessons and values are passes along more clearly in Mohawk.

Jan sees immersion programs as one way to address 'the teenage problem.' If problem teenagers had been in immersion programs, they would have learned the core of the culture, respect and thanksgiving, and would be more likely to act accordingly. She mentioned a study done in Six Nations which demonstrated that those kids taught in immersion programs were more well adjusted than those taught in English. She is concerned for the general health of her community, and the future of Mohawk culture and identity. Efforts to strengthen the language at Tyendinaga are one way to address her concerns.

Appendix D

Interview with Evelyn Corbiere: February 9, 1994

Evelyn is an educator/ administrator at Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve. She has been involved in education since 1962, working as a classroom teacher and more recently as an administrator. She served as acting Director of Education for the band in 1991-92, and is presently the principal of Pontiac Elementary School. This school is located in Wikwemikong and has a student population of approximately one hundred and seventy children grades five to eight.

Evelyn mentioned the Assembly of First Nations four volume study "Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future", published in 1988, as a source of inspiration and direction for her community. Please see Appendix E for some of that study's salient points pertaining to language.

Out-of-School Initiatives to Preserve/ Foster Aboriginal Language in Wikwemikong:

Evelyn identified the following out-of-school initiatives to preserve/ support Aboriginal language (Ojibwe/ Odawa) in her area:

* **Band Council Resolution**

A band council resolution was enacted two years ago making English and Odawa the two official languages in Wikwemikong. Band Council and community members were concerned that few of the young people were speaking the language, and that while Odawa was taught in school, follow-up at home was not being done. The community had a number of meetings to discuss concerns and identify ways and means to make the language a working language, with every day usage. The goal was to support and preserve Odawa, one way being to increase its visibility. It was thought that by making Odawa 'high profile,' community support for continuance of the language would grow. Since this resolution was passed, places and organizations around Wikwemikong have signposts with their Odawa names, band employees answer the 'phone in Odawa, meetings are conducted in both languages, and Aboriginal people who speak the language are advantaged in getting band employment.

* **Local Aboriginal Television Channel**

This service was initiated in 1990, with two prominent community members credited for the initial idea. These individuals took the idea for a local T.V. channel which would feature Aboriginal and local events and broadcast in Odawa, to the Powwow Committee (now called the Wikwemikong Heritage Organization) who developed it. The channel is now broadcasting local events in Odawa, and provides a source of information for community activities. Again, the importance of the language having a high profile in the community is stressed.

* **Ojibwe Cultural Foundation**

This foundation has been in place for some twenty years, and conducts a number of activities to support Aboriginal culture, heritage and language. Cultural Foundation employees spent time with Elders in the community, interviewing them in Ojibwe and recording their stories. Some of this material is available in area schools, along with language booklets developed by the Cultural Foundation.

* **Community Events**

Numerous community events incorporate Odawa. For example, many opening ceremonies for different events incorporate sweet grass ceremonies and prayers and are conducted in Odawa. Local sporting events such as hockey have Odawa commentators and are broadcast on the local T.V. channel. Bingo games are also sometimes conducted in the language.

* **Church Activities**

Local churches (notably the Catholic Church) nave deacons who are Aboriginal community members and speak the language. These deacons are sometimes asked to give an address in the Aboriginal language as part of the church service or other church events. Churches have used the language in naming the buildings, and at least one priest in the community speaks Odawa with some fluency and converses with community members in the language.

<u>In-School Initiatives to Preserve/ Foster Aboriginal Language in Wikwemikong:</u>

Along with those activities discussed above, E. Corbiere identified the following in-school initiatives to preserve/ support Aboriginal language (Ojibwe/ Odawa) in her area:

* **Language Immersion Programs**

A language immersion program is used in the daycare centre for part of the time. This program has the support of parents and community members. Partial immersion programs are also utilized in the nursery and in kindergarten.

* **Language Classes**

Students in the elementary school (grades one to eight) in Wikwemikong receive language instruction for twenty minutes each day. Local colleges and the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation offer general interest courses in Ojibwe for adults.

* **Language Usage by Education Personnel**

Staff in the daycare, nursery and elementary school make a conscious effort to speak the language to each other and to the children, and by so doing, intend to convey the importance of speaking the language to the children. The Principal of the elementary school (Evelyn) regularly makes announcements over the P.A. in Odawa.

Obstacles to Preserving/ Fostering the Aboriginal Language in Wikwemikong:

Evelyn mentioned several things which undermine support for the language in her area.

* **Language Classes Non-credit**

While Aboriginal language classes are available, some which are presently offered as non-credit courses through local community colleges have had poor turn out for classes. The community colleges recognize that language classes might be seen as more valuable if they were credit classes, and are working toward this end.

* **Limited Availability of Language Instructors**

Finding Aboriginal language instructors has sometimes been a problem also. Limited availability has meant that classes may not be offered as readily as desired.

* **English 'Most Useful'**

Some community members believe that while it is fine to use the language in the community, English is the language needed 'out there' outside the community and in the world of work. Therefore, some believe that English should be first and foremost in school, and children should have opportunities to develop that language over Odawa. In addition, English is being used more frequently at home. At the same time, however, Evelyn was not aware of any factions in the community for and against language, and stated that community members follow their leadership for the most part. The fact that the Band Council and others support Odawa and are endeavouring to make the language more high profile should increase support for the language among community members in general.

Appendix E

Excerpt taken from
Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future. Vol. 1.
Assembly of First Nations. Ottawa. 1988. pp.75-77.

"Aboriginal languages in Canada have undergone a distinct pattern of development and survival. The two official languages of Canada have experienced an oral and written development for thousands of years. Aboriginal languages have also spanned thousands of years. However, there is a period in Canadian history during which past governments and Christian authorities suppressed the use of Aboriginal languages in their efforts to assimilate First Nations people into white society. This action has contributed immensely to the decline of the Aboriginal languages. Consequently, a situation has developed whereby less than a quarter of all First Nations children under the age of fifteen acquire an Aboriginal language as their first language.

* Trends show that many indigenous languages will be on the verge of extinction within the next two generations.
* A particularly significant factor in the beginning of this demise is that Elders, who can provide verification and technical guidance in this re-building process, will soon pass away.

The eighty entries made by First Nations affiliations on the subject of Aboriginal languages within the Secondary Research Program stated that there is an urgent need to address langauge development. The entries stressed that once a language is lost, there is not a place elsewhere in the world that First Nations children will be able to go for its renewal. Differing views exist as to the degree of emphasis that should be placed on Aboriginal language development and retention.

While First Nations articulate a strong desire to maintain and develop their Aboriginal languages, this desire becomes less pronounced when its practical application and implementation is considered. Approximately 80% of all respondents reported that they felt it was important for students to speak their Aboriginal language. However, when asked whether it should be used as a main language for classroom teaching, only 32% agreed it should be used, while 50% said no. Respondents believed that students have a right to study their Aboriginal language as a second language in school, however, 68% of the submissions to the Committee of Inquiry reasoned that a lack of funding for development of Aboriginal language dictionaries and the need for curriculum guidelines were problems associated with implementation of First Nations Aboriginal language programs.

It became evident in the research that there is some confusion about the direction that Aboriginal language development should take. Some First Nations communities want Aboriginal language

immersion to occur in the early elementary grades. Education authorities and parents are hesitant to promote these types of programs because they fear that Aboriginal language immersion will be a detriment to the child's mastery of regular school subjects. Other communities want a set of selected courses to be instructed in an Aboriginal language but only in later grades after a child has learned basic English reading and writing skills. A number of respondents from First Nations schools reported that Aboriginal language instruction classes from pre-kindergarten to grade twelve were appropriate for language development.

A significant portion of the entries received by Secondary Research suggested that if instruction occurs in an Aboriginal language, it should be focused in early elementary grades for those communities where Aboriginal language tends to be the first language or native language of the children. Findings of the submissions made to the Committee of Inquiry into education placed special emphasis on the utilization of bilingual education programs, immersion programs, and computerized teaching methods for perpetuating the use of Aboriginal languages to transfer knowledge.

While a debate ensues as to the degree of Aboriginal language instruction that will suffice to preserve the Aboriginal languages, First Nations agree that more Aboriginal language instructors are required in First Nation schools. Improvements to supplies, material, and teaching aids are needed to provide a substantive core curriculum for language. It is also critical that Elders be included as part of the Aboriginal language training programs that exist in schools because they are the key resources for providing technical verification.

The economic dependence that First Nations have on the two official languages diminishes the enthusiasm for preservation of their original languages. The economic situation interferes with the safeguarding of the Aboriginal language because young people and their parents realize that in order to find employment they must favour the learning of the majority languages. This impacts the retention of the maternal language. The force for language retention must, therefore, be all-encompassing to included education personnel and community members. A total community effort is required because children need to practice their daily lessons in the home and in the community where they live. A respect for the Aboriginal language will not be developed if it is not reinforced and promoted within the community. Approximately 81% of those questioned in the Community Survey Program agreed that Aboriginal language training for adults including parents and teachers is a requisite for a successful Aboriginal language program and that this type of training should be available.

There should be increased public and community education respecting the value and importance of Aboriginal language retention, restoration, and instruction. The loss of the

traditional language inhibits the transferral of culture from the Elders to the young. Where available, Elders should be recognized as professional language instructors and cultural education resource persons. There must be far greater numbers of Aboriginal language teachers trained in recognized programs and paid at parity with other professionals in the education system. When desirable, selected subjects in the curriculum should be taught entirely in the local language. Greater use should be made of computers and modern langauge instruction technology in teaching Aboriginal languages. Where there is insufficient time in the school program, language classes should be offered evenings and weekends.

To facilitate the utilization of Aboriginal languages, these should be accorded full elementary and secondary school credit and acceptance for post-secondary entrance and degree requirements along with European languages.

Pre-school programs should be designed for language immersion. Where feasible, language immersion should be utilized in the primary, elementary and even secondary levels. Where immersion is not possible, language instruction should nonetheless occur from pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

Adult level traditional language instruction programs should be designed and offered to school personnel and interested community members."

NOTE:

The above findings resulted from a four year study which was planned by First Nations educators and employed the following research approaches:

1) The Secondary Research Program

This program conducted library research and analyzed 600 reports, studies, evaluations and other documents written since 1970 on the subject of First Nations education. The program provided a review of materials and documents and produced an annotated bibliography.

2) The Community Survey Program

This program designed questionnaires and travelled to 83 communities across Canada, obtaining input from chiefs, councillors, Elders, parents, teachers, students, directors of education, members of education authorities, and others and provided a narrative and statistical analysis of the collected data.

3) The Community Inquiry

This program released funds directly to First Nations to support locally designed and conducted studies. Public hearings were held at 25 sites across Canada in order to obtain oral and written testimony on the results of the local studies or any topic related

to First Nations education; and prepared a narrative and statistical analysis of the testimony and research submissions gathered.

4) The First Nations Schools Review
This program analyzed the experiences of 11 community-controlled schools to review structures, developmental experiences, educational approaches and innovations, and provided a descriptive report of the findings.

5) The Policy Development Program
This program investigated selected federal, provincial, territorial, and First Nations policies and regulations affecting First Nations education, noting deficiencies in current policies, and utilized the information gathered from the other programs and merged topical research to recommend funding alternatives and policy changes.

6) The Legislative Development Program
This program researched Canadian and international laws affecting First Nations education.